Woman of FAITH MAGAZINE

ISSUE 53 | 2025 | EMAG | OCTOBER

WHEN I THINK GOD IS STRETCHING ME

EVEN WHEN YOU FEEL OVERLOOKED, YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER STILL DELIGHTS IN YOU!

BY THE RIVER SIDE OF BABYLON

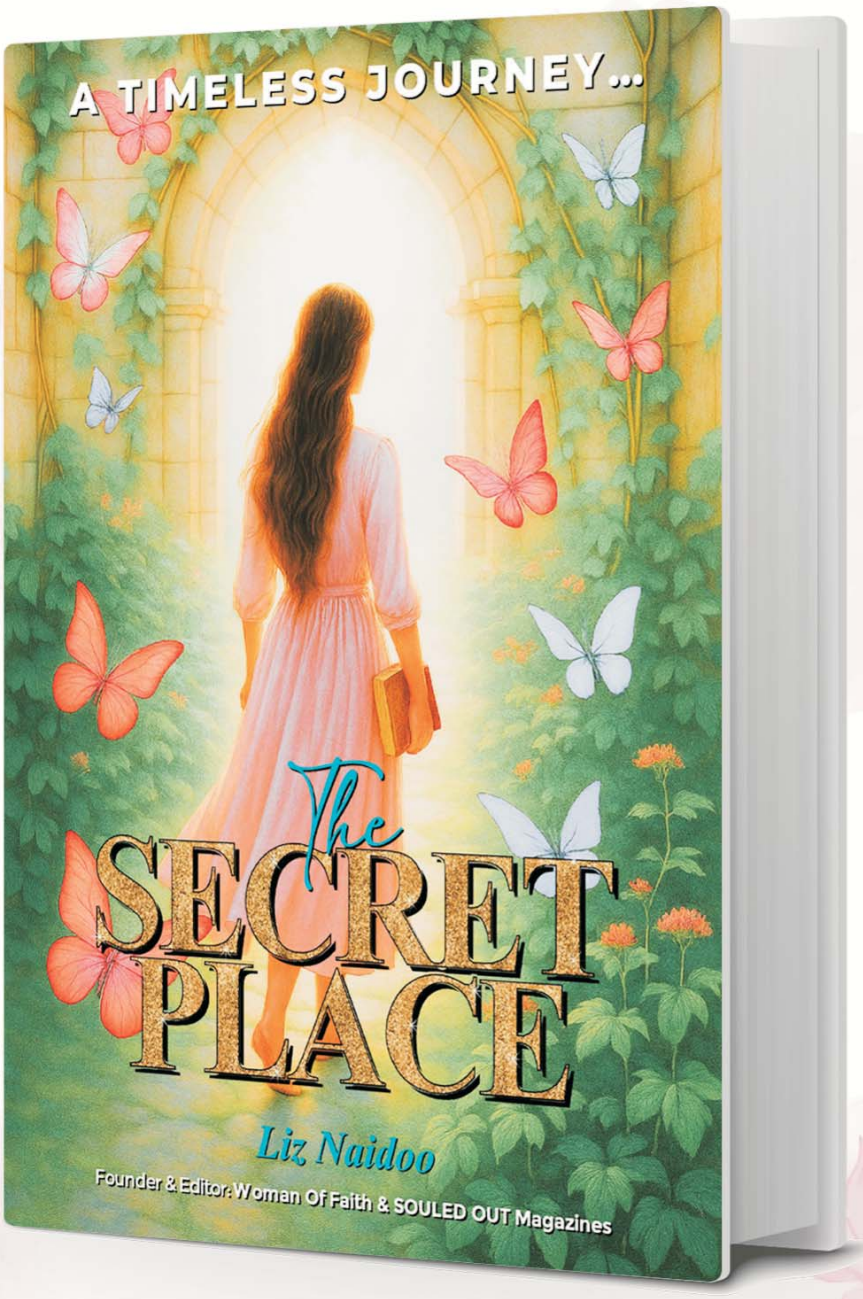
THE FIRST "W O F"

Mmathabo Sukati

SHARES HER STORY:

A Child Bride's Journey to Courage and Calling

The Secret Place



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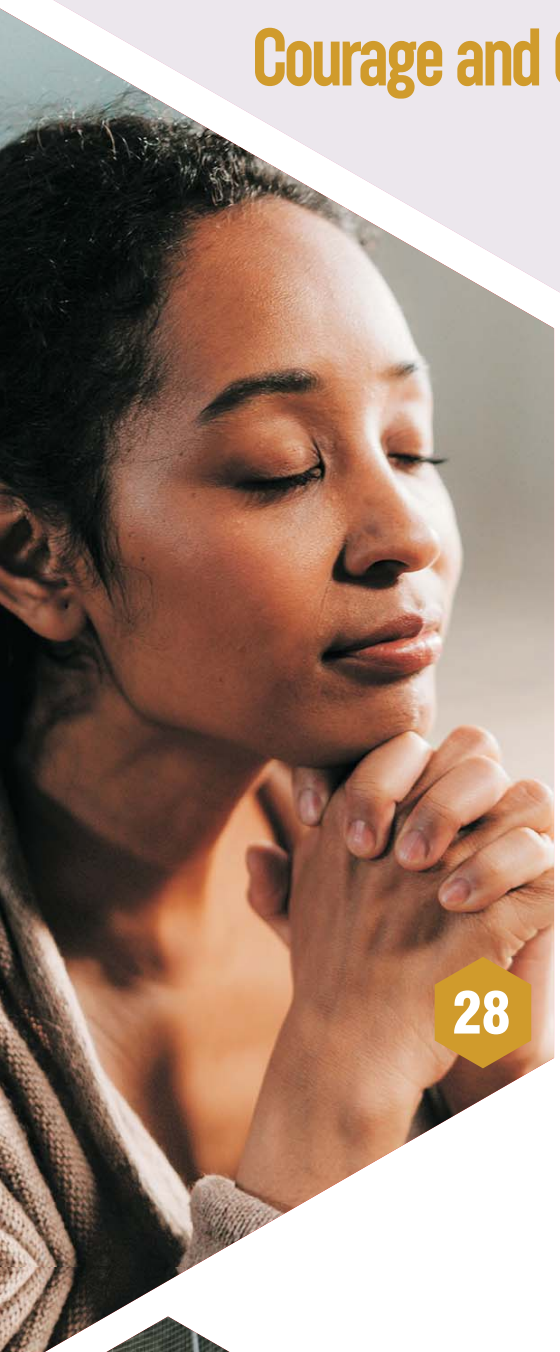

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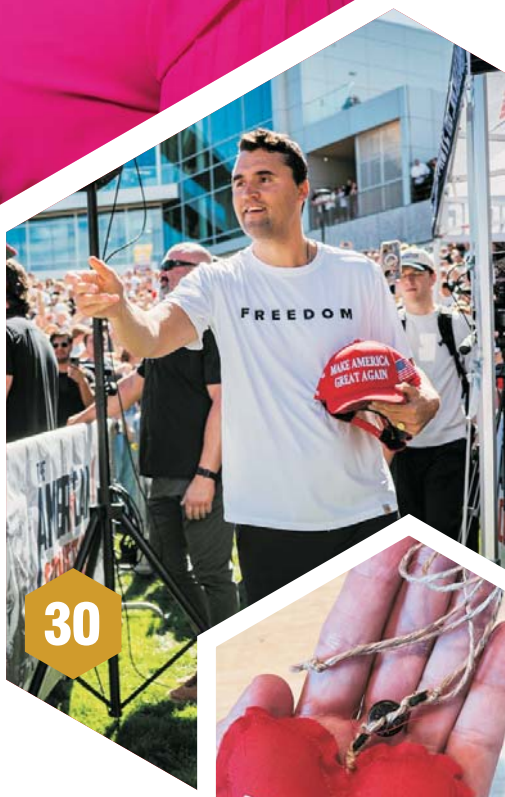

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Writer/ Contributor

Liz Naidoo
EDITOR & FOUNDER
DURBAN, SA

Heidi Gibson
DURBAN, SA

Pastor Julie Ramiah
DURBAN, SA

Tressa Lemky
WINNIPEG, CANADA

Connie Mannering
ONTARIO, CANADA

Christie Amoyo
WINNIPEG, CANADA

Janet Perez Eckles
FLORIDA, USA

Datha Whitfield
ALABAMA, USA

Dr Suryakumar Daimari
ASSAM, INDIA

PUBLISHER
Woman of Faith Publications

ASSISTANT EDITOR
Heidi Gibson

PUBLICATIONS EDITOR
Liz Naidoo

DESIGN AND LAYOUT
The Design Team

ADVERTISING & MARKETING
info@womannoffaith.co.za

COVER FEATURE
Mmathabo Sukati
Gauteng, Sout Africa

COVER IMAGE
VezintokozoDloddlo
Cino Media, Sandton. Johannesburg
+27 68 097 4339

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Liz Naidoo	Durban, South Africa
Pastor Julie Ramiah	Durban, South Africa
Tressa Lemky	Winnipeg, Canada
Connie Mannering	Ontario, Canada
Christie Amoyo	Winnipeg, Canada
Janet Perez Eckles	Florida, USA
Datha Wilson Whitfield	Alabama, USA
Dr Suryakumar Daimari	Assam, India

THANK YOU FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Mmathabo, how marvelous is it when we share stories of success and God's goodness in lives of women such as yourself. You are an inspiration. Your boldness and courage and your love for God has brought you your success. May you continue to encourage others to be as bold as yourself.

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The Editor's Note

As we unveil this edition of *Woman of Faith Magazine*, our hearts brim with gratitude and reverence.

September has been a very eventful month for me. I have been busy planning our conference for the 4th of October to celebrate *Woman of Faith magazine's 10th anniversary,* as well as the launch of my first book. *The Secret Place* is a journal designed to empower every woman to cultivate a more intimate relationship with God. This journal was crafted with you in mind, a woman seeking after the heart of God. I would like every woman to get a copy if possible. Details will follow in the months ahead for a purchasing outlet near you.

This October, we celebrate the radiant Mmathabo Sukati, author and visionary. Our cover lady's story is inspiring, yet heartfelt. Her book, **The Child Bride: From Captive to Courageous,** echoes with grace, courage, and divine purpose. Her story reminds us that faith is not just a quiet whisper but a bold declaration of hope.

Yet even as we rejoice, we pause to mourn. The recent assassination of Charlie Kirk, a young man whose voice stirred campuses and conversations across the USA and various parts of the globe, has left a deep ache in many hearts, mine included. His death on September 10th in Utah, at the age of only 31, was not just a political moment; it was a human loss. A husband, a father, a son, a believer. A light extinguished too soon.

I have been following Charlie on social media for a long while and his love for Jesus and the Word of God, always resonated with me. I am a mother of two adult sons, my oldest turned 30, three months ago. I would often talk about Charlie to my oldest, and about the tremendous work he was doing in campuses in USA, and we were both in awe at his great ability. When I heard of his death, I wept like a mother would weep for a child she has not met, but my tears were not only for Charlie, but for the world that so easily forgets the weight of a soul. In the words of Erika Kirk, his wife, "I forgive him because it's what Christ did. And it's what Charlie would do." That kind of mercy shakes the heavens.

May this issue remind us to live boldly for Christ, love deeply, and forgive fiercely. For in every story shared, every tear shed, and every prayer whispered, we draw nearer to the heart of God.

Sending you my love from Durban, South Africa.

Liz Naidoo

Founder & Editor,
WOMAN OF FAITH Magazine

Let Us Pray

A Prayer For Peace and Protection

(Anon)

Heavenly Father, I humble myself before you, placing my trust in your loving care.

You are my strength and my refuge, my shelter in any storm. Protect me from all dangers, known and unknown. Surround me with your heavenly presence and command your angels to guard my life, my loved ones, and my path.

Keep me from harm, from sickness, and from any evil that seeks to harm or disturb me.

Grant me a deep and lasting peace of mind, even in difficult and confusing circumstances.

When my heart is troubled, let me find calm and hope in knowing that you are with me.

Give me the grace to walk in your ways and to be a reflection of your love and peace to others.

I place my life and my future in your hands, Lord, and I believe that your protection is sure.

In your name, I pray, Amen.

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ISSUE 15 | 2025 | EMAG | SEPTEMBER
SOULED Out
A21: THE DIGITAL BATTLEFIELD
STEWARDING YOUR MIND: STEPS TO GUARD AGAINST DEMENTIA
AN AMBASSADOR'S AUTHORITY
A WISH AND A PRAYER
FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS:
Ron & Tressa Lemky

SUBSCRIBE AND READ TODAY

Now I See

by Janet Perez Eckles

First Class Faith: Why You Should Never Settle for Less!

Not bragging or boasting...
Well, maybe just a little.
There I was, grinning like a kid in a candy store, sinking into a wide leather seat - big enough for two of me. The legroom? Generous enough for the Jolly Green Giant.
Yes, friends, I was flying first class on a 747. No, I didn't pay for it. This chica doesn't roll like that. I was simply blessed - invited to fly with a friend whose husband, a pilot, got us buddy passes. And to my surprise... we were seated in first class.
"Anything to drink?" the flight attendant asked.
"Water, no ice," I said, expecting a cup. Instead, he handed me a full bottle.
Then came the snacks. Not peanuts vs. pretzels. Options. Real options. I leaned back, savoring the moment and the luxury.

And that's when it hit me: Why do we settle for coach-class living when God offers us first-class blessings?

Too often, we accept the world's "just enough" when God has prepared more than enough. We choose between busyness and burnout, between anxiety and exhaustion - when God offers peace, purpose, and joy.

We live like we only have two options, when God has a whole menu, we haven't even glanced at.
Friend, God isn't offering you peanuts and pretzels. He's offering you peace that surpasses understanding, joy that overflows, confidence rooted in His promises, and a future filled with hope.
"No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him." - 1 Corinthians 2:9

Let's stop settling for what the world gives and start reaching for what God has already prepared. Life in His grace isn't just better. it's the best.

Are you still living in coach when God is calling you forward? ?? It's time to take your seat in first class.
Let God pilot your life and trust Him with the journey.

Today, trust in Him and make a choice. Step into God's promises. Choose His best. Let go of the world's limitations and embrace the abundant, first-class life your Heavenly Father has already prepared for you.
Are you ready to move forward?

"And that's when it hit me: Why do we settle for coach-class living when God offers us first-class blessings?"

www.janetperezeckles.com

Talking with Tressa

www.youtube.com/@tressalemky

The FIRST "W O F"

I know Liz will be surprised – even perhaps a little uncomfortable to find herself at the centre of my Talking with Tressa article, because she is a woman who prefers to serve quietly behind the scenes. Yet as Woman of Faith magazine celebrates its 10th anniversary, I feel it is essential that the very woman God entrusted with this vision – its founder, my dear friend Liz Naidoo, be honoured for her faithfulness, perseverance, and unwavering trust in the Lord.

Woman of FAITH
MAGAZINE
JUNE
THE SECRET PLACE
THIS IS NOT MY PORTION
They Found no Fault in Him!
Tressa Lemky
My Esther story and how I found my God given Purpose

Tressa on the cover of June 2023 "WOF"

When God first impressed upon Liz's *heart* the idea of starting a magazine, she had no previous experience in such an endeavour. She could have easily dismissed the prompting as impossible. Instead, she chose obedience. With a teachable spirit and confidence that God would guide and equip her, Liz stepped out in faith. She learned the ins and outs of publishing, faced countless challenges, and pressed forward with determination. She never gave up, believing that what God had started, He would complete.

Like a true Proverbs 31 woman, Liz has demonstrated diligence, wisdom, and strength of character. Her story even reminds me of Esther, who was willing to step into the unknown, surrendering fully to God's will. Liz embodies that same spirit – eternity-minded, humble, and surrendered. She is elegant and engaging, yet also approachable and eager to serve. Those who know her see a tender heart, a teachable spirit, and a humility that honours others.

The journey of Woman of Faith magazine has not been without its trials. During the global COVID-19 pandemic, when the magazine could no longer be sold in South African stores, it seemed as though the work might be hindered. Yet once again, God provided a

way. Liz's son Jared encouraged her to transition the magazine online, and Liz faithfully followed the Lord's leading. Soon after, God spoke to her again, this time with the instruction that the magazine was to be freely available.

What began as a publication sold in stores in South Africa is now a global online ministry. Through its pages, thousands of subscribers have encountered stories of God's goodness, faithfulness, and restoration. It has become a platform where writers from around the world share testimonies and insights, encouraging women in their walk with Christ.

My own story is one example. I was first introduced to the magazine five years ago and never imagined that I would one day be on its cover in 2023, let alone have the privilege of writing a monthly column in Woman of Faith or its sister publication, Souled Out. For the first three years, I was simply a reader, blessed by the testimonies of others. Then came the unexpected invitation to be on the cover, which opened the door to my column, ***Talking with Tressa.*** What began as inspiration became an opportunity to share my own story and has since grown into a ministry that blesses me as much as I hope it blesses others.

Liz flanked by her younger son, Jared on her left and older, Brenton, on her right at the launch of WOF, 1st August 2015

Though the world knows her as Liz, she was born Elizabeth – a name her father loved. I believe she wears it well, for like Queen Elizabeth, she carries herself with elegance and grace. Two things I love most about her are her deep love for Jesus and her unwavering faith that God will always provide – no matter what. Even when I encouraged her to consider charging a small subscription fee, her response was always rooted in faith that God would supply.

Even as we celebrate this ten-year milestone, Liz continues to expand her ministry. She is now launching a beautiful women's devotional called **The Secret Place.** Just as the magazine has been a blessing to so many, this devotional journal promises to lead women deeper into intimacy with God. Once again, Liz shows us what it means to live with an eternity mindset – using her gifts not for her own recognition, but for the glory of God and the edification of His people.

So, in this issue, I chose to honour Liz as both the backbone and the heart of Woman of Faith.

Liz, your vision, perseverance, and faith have made an eternal impact. From my heart to yours, I say congratulations on ten incredible years. Thank you for being faithful, for believing God when others might have doubted, and for creating a legacy that will continue to inspire generations.

And to every reader, I leave you with this challenge: follow Liz's example. Step out in faith when God calls. Say yes, even when it feels impossible. Live with an eternity mindset, and let your obedience become the spark that impacts lives for generations to come.

It is one of my greatest privileges to call you my friend...Elizabeth Naidoo, the first Woman of Faith of WOF Magazine.

Christie Amoyo
LIFE OF FAITH

Boldness will get the job done!

I was sitting by the pool this summer, enjoying the hot weather. It was very busy; families were everywhere. Suddenly this woman comes through the gate and started towards me in a huff. "Christie, I've been looking for you. I need you to come with me NOW!"

Because she was a friend's sister, I trusted her and immediately got my things together. She then said, "You are going to meet my friend and pray for her."

My friend's sister had read my first book and the testimonies of my miracle babies, and she had hoped that my prayer and connection will be beneficial to her friend that was going through similar. No time to waste...it's "now" that she wanted this done.

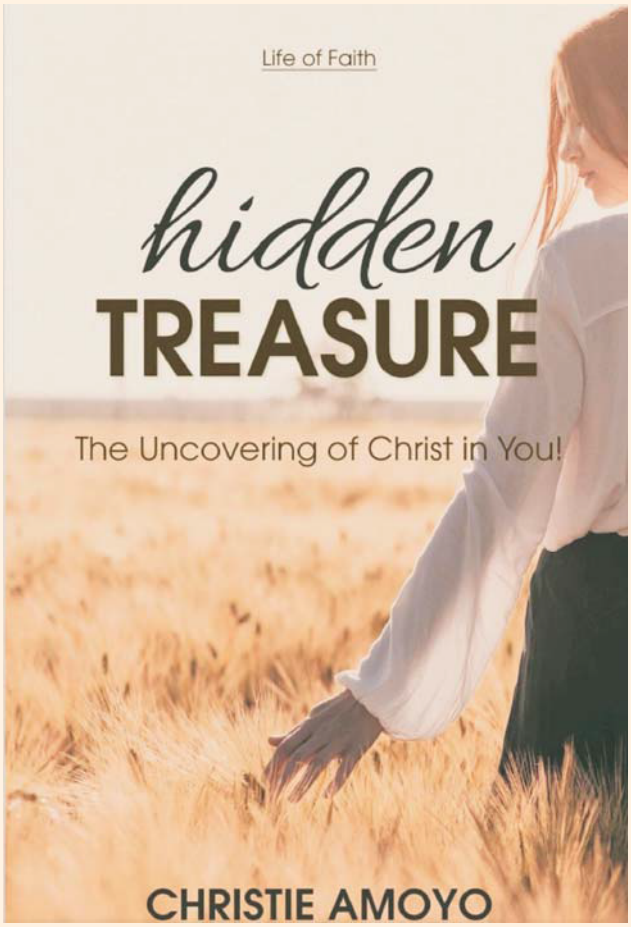
What a great reminder it was, that no matter what is going on around us we are to be always ready to share the hope of Jesus and be ready to encourage and pray for others.

Her boldness demanded the attention; commanded the situation and drew all attention to Jesus!

The Word of God will bring revelation to your heart and Boldness to do what God has called you to do.

If the enemy has tried to steal, kill or destroy things in your life (Jn. 10:10) then its time to Take it Back because Jesus came to give us Life More Abundantly.
The wicked man flees though no one pursues but the righteous are as bold as a lion. (Prov.28:1)

Click on the link below to get a copy of Christie's book. **Hidden Treasure, The Promised Child** and more.



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“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go".

JOSHUA 1:9

Datha Wilson Whitfield

FINDING MY PURPOSE

Even when you feel overlooked, Your Heavenly Father still delights in you!

Football season has begun here in the states and recently I had the joy of attending my 10-year-old grandson's very first football game.

He had been practicing for months, waiting for this big day. The excitement on his face as he slipped into his purple uniform was priceless! His helmet shone with a bold lightning bolt, pads making him look older than his ten years. His team's name - The Flashes.

Here in the South, even at 5pm, the heat is relentless. The air was thick, the temperature near ninety degrees as we made our way to the metal bleachers.

I already knew he wouldn't play in this game. The coach had explained that only the older, more experienced sixth graders would take the field in the season opener. My grandson would spend the game on the sidelines, learning and waiting for his turn. But that didn't matter to me.

That morning, I had gotten up early, packed an overnight bag, and driven five long hours to Vicksburg Mississippi, through construction and delays just to be there. And I would do it again in a heartbeat. It wasn't about how many plays he ran - it was about being present. I wanted him to see me in the stands, waving, clapping, and cheering him on. I wanted him to know his first game mattered, even if he never stepped onto the field.

And that's the beautiful reminder I carried home: sometimes the sidelines matter as much as the spotlight. Presence speaks louder than performance. My grandson didn't score a touchdown, but he looked up and saw me - his grandmother, smiling, clapping, and loving him just the same.

Isn't that a glimpse of how God loves us? Even when we feel overlooked or stuck on the sidelines of life, our Heavenly Father still sees us, and He watches over us. His love isn't tied to our performance, but to who we are. His children. And when our moment comes to step into the field He has prepared, we can do so with confidence, knowing we've never been unseen, and we've never been unloved!

"I had the joy of attending my 10-year-old grandson's very first football game."

https://dathawhitfieldcoaching.com/

"I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service."

1 TIMOTHY 1:12

Mmathabo Sukati SHARES HER STORY: A Child Bride's Journey to Courage and Calling

By Heidi Gibson

Mmathabo with friends at launch of her book.

This is a testimony of unimaginable hardship, adversity, and unshakable trust in God. Forced into marriage at the tender age of 15, Mmathabo was thrust into a life of isolation and abuse, her voice silenced before it had the chance to speak.

Through her years of torment as a 15-year-old child bride, Mmathabo Sukati clung to God, His Promises and His Word. Her unwavering faith eventually catapulting her out of this dire situation, leading her to new heights and successes. Today, she is a qualified chartered accountant, having worked as a corporate executive for prestigious firms. She has launched a ministry that seeks to lift the lid on this hidden practice, giving a voice to emotionally abused women.

Her story of triumph, strength and ultimately forgiveness is documented in her book entitled: **The Child Bride: From Captive to Courageous.** She shared parts of this remarkable journey in an interview with Woman of Faith magazine.

A highly spiritual woman, Mmathabo's life is anchored in the Lord. A simple scripture, amongst others, such as **Psalm 23: 'The Lord is my Shepherd I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside still waters, he restores my soul'** has carried her through her trials and tribulations.

At the age of ten, she was **born again.** A seminal moment, that she confesses, she did not really understand or comprehend at the time. Being born again is a deeply significant moment in the journey of any Christian. It can involve a symbolic ceremony where the person is immersed in water and then brought out again signifying that your past sins are washed away, and you now take on a new identity in Christ.

Looking back though, she is deeply grateful for the intervention of a relative who encouraged her to take this step of faith at the time. Describing the circumstances at the time, she said:

"At the time my mother was not living with us. She had left my brother and me in the care of our father while she went to study nursing at Baragwanath Hospital in Johannesburg. My father was an alcoholic and my aunt Rose had moved in to help take care of us. She attended a church in the township called Assemblies of God. So, I began attending this church with her. I did not understand what **born again** actually meant. But I knew deeply that God loved me," she said.

It was from here that a so-called prophecy came that would change her life.

"A member of this church, came to visit my mom, and said he had received a prophecy. He told my mom that an ancestor told him that I must go to live with this man as 'a second wife', that I must live with him and his wife and provide them with children."

"I was told I had no choice on the matter and that everything had been arranged. That the **'lobola*'** had been paid. When I heard this, I felt a chill go down my spine. It felt like a nightmare that someone was going to wake me from. I was forcefully taken to the home of this man, who was viewed to be rich in the community," she said.

The details of her struggle to adapt and accept this new-found situation – a forced marriage – are all documented in her book.

Mmathabo told how she would spend time praying, seeking God's protection and guidance, and at times she would become extremely angry at her situation. Yet, all the time she knew that what she was experiencing did not come from God.

"I can't explain it. He revealed Himself to me,

"Set free" – Mmathabo speaks about her book, The Child Bride.

During that dark season, she struggled deeply with despair and suicidal thoughts.

"I wanted to end my life, but I also knew that doing so went against God's teachings. A turning point came at the end of my first pregnancy. I wanted to protect my child. I wanted to fight to make sure that she would never end up like I had. I was full of conflict, but I knew that God loved me, so I decided to fight."

She leaned on His strength - determined to protect her children from harm.

Six years and four children later, Mmathabo finally took the bold step of reclaiming her life and her voice. Her children ultimately spurred her on to escape from the clutches of what had become a dark abyss. A place she previously had lost all hope of ever overcoming.

Describing the process, the courage, and the grace that God gave her, she said 'it felt like a supernatural power' that was leading her, helping her and guiding her to focus on what needed to be done – each tiny step of the way.

She finally fled with not a cent to her name – just a promise of help from a friend living in Bushbuckridge – and the steadfast belief that God would provide and protect her. And He did.

through the word, to continue to **TRUST in Him (Proverbs 3: 5-6),** and I did," she said.

She said she learnt about the Bible, while at school during a subject called Religious Studies, and remembered the story of how Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt and into the Promised Land and knew that God would lead her out of her situation.

She went back to school and studied hard – knowing she had to make up for lost time. She decided to become a chartered accountant and never looked back.

Today she stands as a tower of strength having held various executive positions in several prestigious corporate firms, amongst them PwC, Transnet, SARS, and MTN South Africa. She has a B Com: Financial Accounting and Information Systems from the University of Cape Town (1996), a post-graduate Diploma in Accounting and B Com: Honors in Accounting from the same university. She also obtained an MBA from the University of Pretoria (2011) and has completed a programme for Leadership Development from Harvard Business School (2025).

At the core, forgiveness has been central to her Christian Walk, and she has lived by this principle. She prayed that God would help her overcome the bitterness and anger that she felt inside, for the people that allowed this situation to play out.

"I knew if I did not forgive, I would get distracted and not be able to move forward. I did not want to waste time; I wanted to rebuild my life. I have forgiven the man and his wife and my parents for forcing me into the marriage. I also forgave all the other role players who enabled the situation. And to those who did not apologize, I chose to accept an apology that never came. It was important for me to forgive and release myself from the anger and bitterness so I could focus on my goals."

She has found time to attend Bible college being guided by the desire to know God for herself and to understand her identity in Christ. **2 Corinthians 5:17**

She spent three years at the Christian Family Church Bible College under the pastorship of Theo Wolmarans and three years at the Charis Bible College Johannesburg under the guidance of Andrew Wommack.

Currently Mmathabo is contemplating what the next step will be, what shape her ministry will take, as she leans closer to God.

"I believe that my life is an embodiment of the truth that God can redeem any situation – no matter how broken. My story is a true testament of God's love for His child. He led me and comforted me during my darkest times. He always cheers me on, even now."

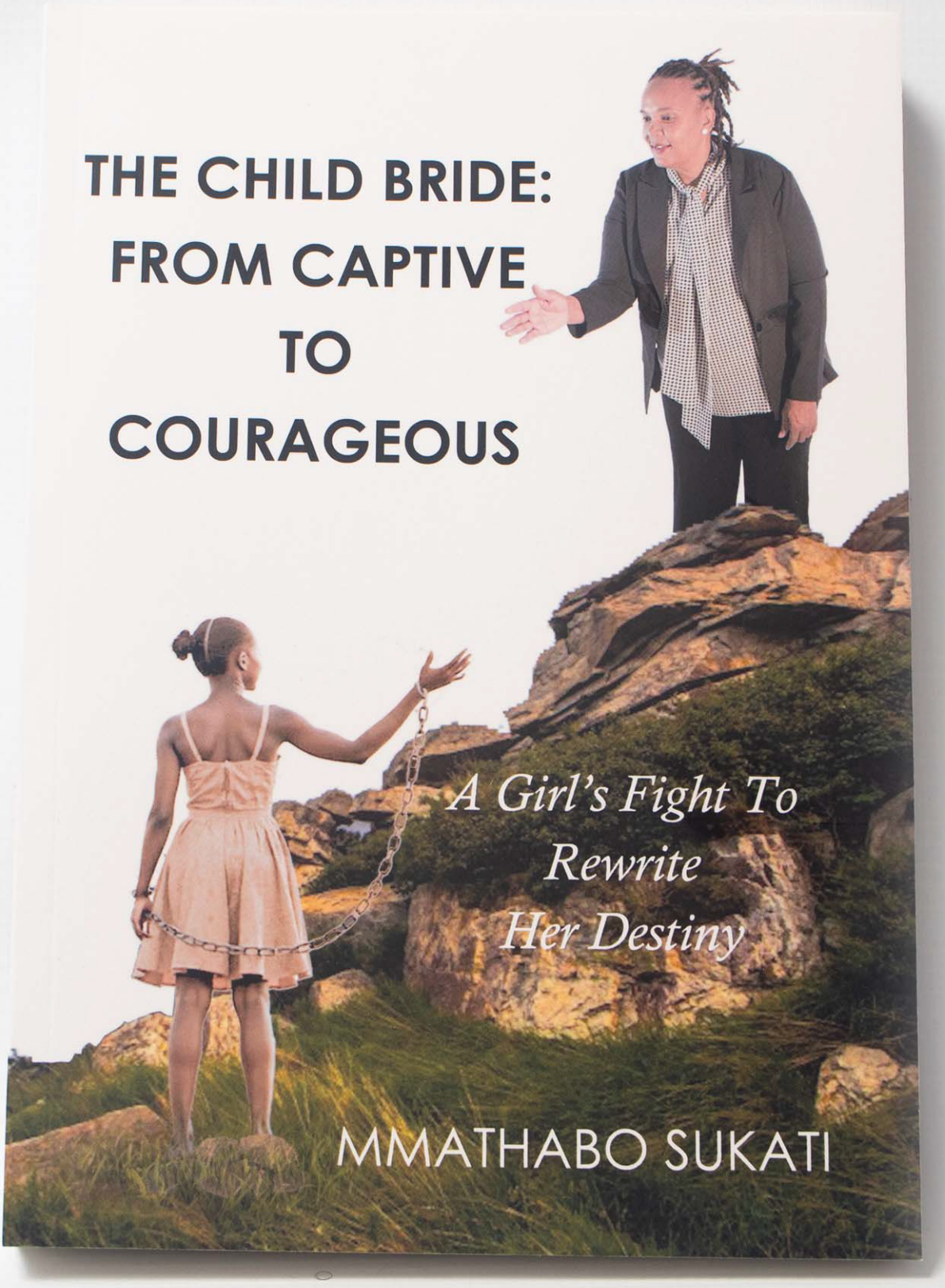
Her message to other young child brides in an 'arranged' marriage is simple:

"This world is full of evil, but God's love is greater. Hold on to your faith and never give up. Your dreams are valid and your voice matters. Hold on to God's promises. He honours His Word. Remember the story of Shadrach, Meshack and Abednego, who survived the fiery furnace and who came out without a scratch or smell of fire. Keep fighting. Keep standing on the truth of who you are in Christ. He will see you through".

Mmathabo's story of God's faithfulness, resilience through suffering, and the healing power of forgiveness, is a reminder that even in the darkest valleys, His light still shines.

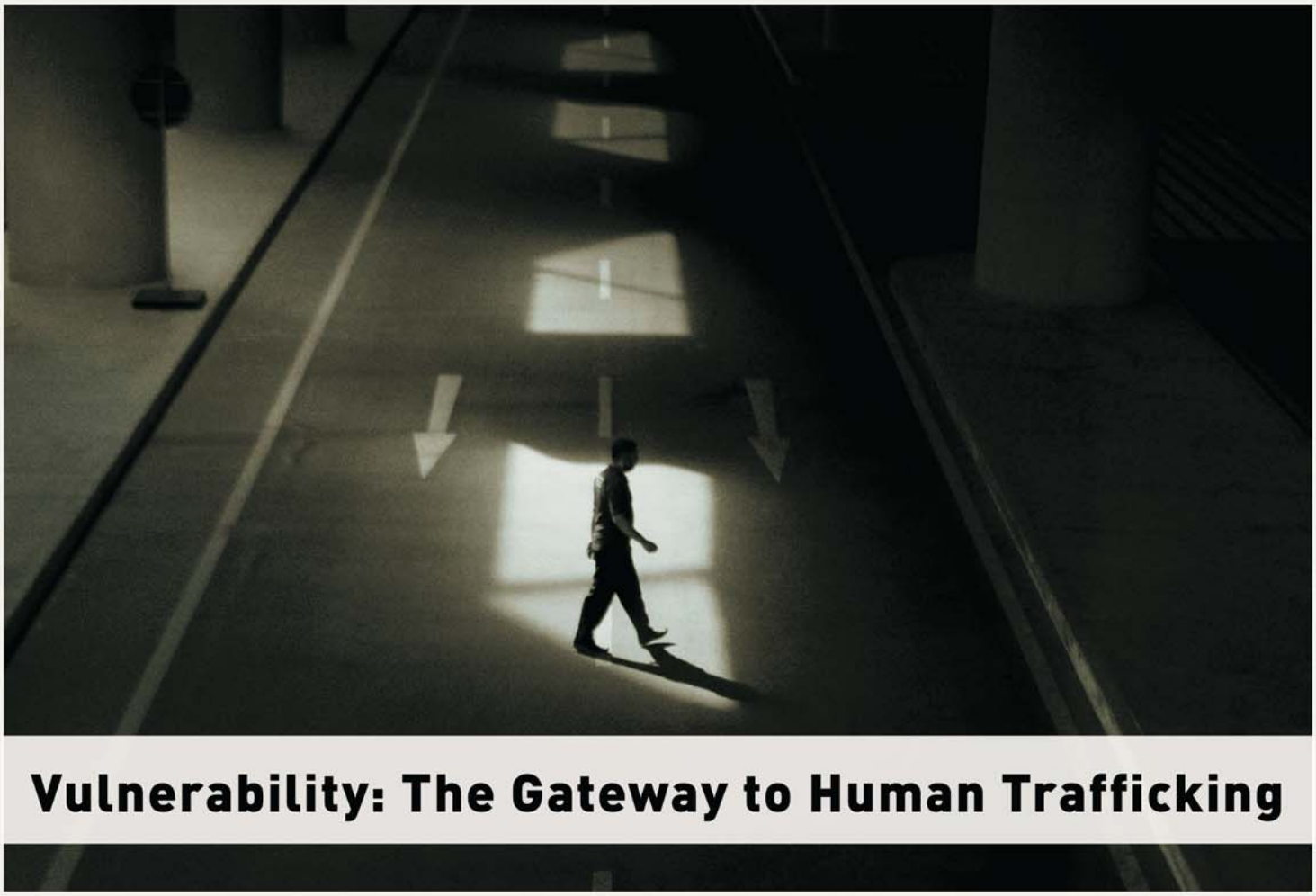
Mmathabo has shared her story on various platforms to raise awareness on the negative impact of child marriages and interventions to end this ancient practice. For further information go to:
www.mmathabosukati.com

**Lobola is an African traditional custom where the potential bridegroom 'pays' the family of his bride-to-be either in cash or in cattle. The value of the bride and the amount that is eventually agreed upon is determined through a series of meetings involving the male relatives and is determined based on her level of education, age and other perceived factors. The practice is still recognized today.*



For a copy of this book:

www.mmathabosukati.com



Vulnerability: The Gateway to Human Trafficking

The first step in the cycle of exploitation.

Every story of human trafficking begins with one thing: Vulnerability. Traffickers prey on it. Vulnerability to human trafficking is not limited to a single area or demographic. It is a worldwide problem with roots in intersecting factors like violence, poor education, substance misuse, disability, unemployment or isolation. Traffickers exploit poverty, brokenness, lack of opportunity, or the simple desire for a better life.

Vulnerability is the open door through which exploitation walks.

In South Africa, more than half the population (54%) is vulnerable to trafficking. Globally, the scale is staggering:

49.6 million people enslaved worldwide

$236 billion USD generated yearly

1 in 4 victims are children.

At A21 we work to equip people everywhere with the information, resources, and tools that can prevent exploitation before it begins. Prevention education empowers communities to recognise signs of human trafficking in their surroundings—so they can report suspected trafficking to law enforcement for intervention. The more people understand what vulnerabilities traffickers target, the better equipped they are to stop exploitation.

Common vulnerabilities traffickers exploit include age, lack of housing, limited employment opportunities, and displacement, while emotional and psychological factors—such as loneliness, grief, trauma, low self-esteem, and mental health challenges—can also create openings for exploitation.

By addressing vulnerability as a common thread and equipping people with the knowledge and tools to protect themselves and others, human trafficking can be prevented. When communities are informed and empowered, exploitation can be prevented – and freedom can take its place.

Prevention is the solution to minimising risk and protecting the freedom of those most at risk of exploitation.

It's Our Responsibility to Safeguard the Vulnerable

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BEAUTY IN THE ASHES

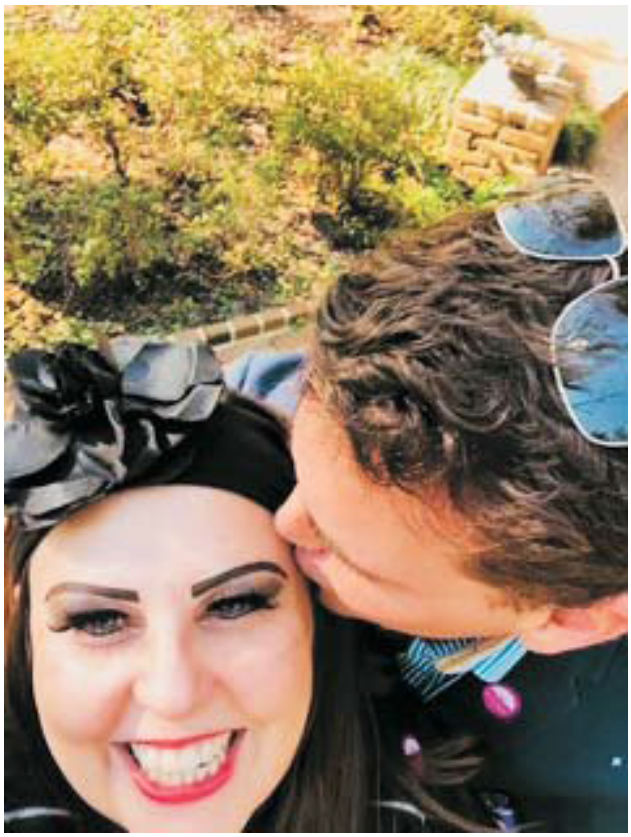
by

CONNIE MANNERING

This October Connie Mannering celebrates JOY with Dr. Jesus!

When October rolls around, pink ribbons start showing up everywhere, on coffee cups, sneakers, cereal boxes, and billboards. While I appreciate awareness, let me be honest: I don't like giving breast cancer any accolades. It doesn't deserve a celebration, a parade, or a ribbon. What does deserve the spotlight is the faithfulness of God, the joy of the Holy Spirit, and the power of Jesus Christ, our Great Physician.

Years ago, I found myself staring down a diagnosis that threatened to steal my peace. Doctors did their best-they poked, prodded, scanned, and scribbled notes in thick files. They had names for treatments, percentages for survival, and pamphlets filled with side effects. Somewhere between the statistics and the sterile walls, I decided I wasn't going to let cancer define me.



Trials don't define you-they identify you! They reveal what's on the inside. Greater is He that is in me than he that is in the world (1 John 4:4).

Choosing Joy When Joy Doesn't Make Sense

The Bible says, "The joy of the Lord is your strength" (Nehemiah 8:10). That isn't a suggestion—it's a lifeline. When my body felt weak, joy became my fuel. When fear tried to take the driver's seat, I laughed in its face. Sometimes literally.

I wasn't laughing because everything was fine. I was laughing because my spirit knew a secret: Jesus always has the final word. Doctors may diagnose, yet only Dr. Jesus determines the outcome.

That's why I say joy is the real medicine-not chemo, not radiation, not statistics. Joy lifts you when the world thinks you should be flat on your back. Joy confuses the enemy. Joy keeps you walking into the cancer clinic with your head held high, cracking jokes about hospital gowns and finding ways to encourage the nurses who came in to "help" you.

When cancer thought that it was going to write my obituary, God handed me a new chapter instead.

Greater Than Any Situation

Life is fragile, yet it is also powerful when placed in the hands of God. The trial of cancer didn't

break me-it built me. It clarified my calling and deepened my joy. It reminded me that I am not defined by what comes against me, but by the One who lives inside me.

James 1:2 tells us to "Consider it pure joy whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance." I didn't always feel like throwing a party in the middle of a cancer clinic. However, joy is not a feeling-it's a choice. It is an act of defiance against despair.

So, I chose to dance in the middle of the storm. To dress up when I felt like hiding. To worship when my emotions begged me to worry. To laugh when tears seemed easier. Every time I leaned into joy; God met me right there.

Beauty in the Ashes

My full story is written in my book **Beauty in the Ashes**, where I share the details of my journey. Yet the headline will always be the same: God heals. He restores. He turns ashes into beauty.

Cancer did not get the final say. ***Jesus did.*** The testimony of His goodness now fuels my mission: to inject joy into every room I walk into, to remind people that their diagnosis doesn't get to boss them around, and to declare that no pit is too deep for God's redemption.

This October, while the world raises ribbons, I raise my voice. Not for cancer, but for Christ. Not for awareness, but for assurance. Assurance that no matter what report you've been handed, cancer, depression, betrayal, heartbreak, there's a higher report. "Whose report will you believe? We shall believe the report of the Lord" (Isaiah 53).

The Last Word

If you're reading this and you've been handed a diagnosis - or maybe just walking through a tough season - hear this: You are more than a statistic. You are not defined by your struggle. You are greater than the situation staring you down.

So, choose joy. Choose faith. Choose to believe in Dr. Jesus, who has never lost a case... Because at the end of the day, cancer is not the headline. ***Jesus is!***

"Life is fragile, yet it is also powerful when placed in the hands of God. The trial of cancer didn't break me-it built me"

ANGEL BROWN

DAUGHTER OF THE KING

HE HOLDS YOUR HEART IN HIS HAND

God uses broken people with imperfections, flaws, and some who looks like a Saul. God will even use the very ones who have felt unqualified for the call - He is not looking for perfection at all.

When you messed up, He comes in with healing in His wings. He gives you a sweet gift. Hope...to experience restoration. God is there to catch you and pick you up when you fall. Feel the shift. He leads and guides you, gives you redirection. Don't delay. Don't stall.

"Healing is a process. Don't rush it. Own your part. Examine your heart."

God wants your heart even while He is mending the broken pieces - All of it! The shattered collection. Even the charred parts of your heart that burnt you - like being mishandled, discarded, and that painful rejection.

(Psalms 34:18) "The Lord is near to the broken-hearted and saves the crushed in spirit"

The great Physician is massaging your heart, holding your heart in His hands. Healing the unplanned grief. He is gently cleaning the exposed wound. Applying healing balm that fills the gash. He is wrapping the gauze to cover the cuts. The unrelenting pain in the depth of your heart.

He is at work mending the words that hurt you. He is tearing down those walls that you built to self-protect. He is drawing near to you, where you tried to disconnect. God is filling that lonely place. Imparting peace. He is carefully stitching up the wound. Woven in grace. It was painful and you wear the scar. Battle wounds. God is never far.

God is unravelling the garments of shame. The raw ache that pierced the soul. He is at work tending to what broke you. Jesus took the blame. God bottles all your tears. His word helps you overcome all your fears. He is placing the bandage of love to cover the wounds.

Healing is a process. Don't rush it. Own your part. Examine your heart.

Streams of healing flow. Freedom. Fresh fire. Ignited. A holy flame. A golden glow. God uses broken people, this I know.

Let Him have your heart. Let Him mend the broken places. He holds your heart in His hand.

"So do not fear, for I am with you;
Do not be dismayed, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you and help you; I will
Uphold you with my righteous right hand."

ISAIAH 41:10

BY THE RIVER SIDE OF BABYLON

Dr Suryakumar Daimari

Psalm 137 is perhaps the reminiscent of the saddest story of the Israelites in a foreign land. Yet, the composition as a Plaintive Ode is one of the best and most charming in the entire Book of Psalms which manifests what the poetic power is. The Ode itself is rich in poetical form, full of imageries, simile, and metaphors-- like the rivers, the harps, the willows, the songs that reflect their lamentation, anguish and sorrows. The Rivers of Babylon refer to the most pleasant flowing rivers of the territory of Babylon--- mainly the Euphrates, Tigris and the other rivulets by which side the Israelites sat down for retirement after the banishment from Zion. They were now in exile after the Babylonian conquest of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

"As the captives, the children of Israel sat down by the river side for a little breathing and rest to unburden their deep sorrow"

"We wept when we remembered Zion"-

The remembrance of Zion, the joy and love, the peace they had with their God Jehovah when they were obedient to His laws, greatly aggravated their present desolation due to their sins and disobedience. Jerusalem was seized, destroyed, and razed to the ground. The Temple was destroyed and desecrated. There was significant loss of life, while hundreds and thousands brought to captives.

As the captives, the children of Israel sat down by the river side for a little breathing and rest to unburden their deep sorrow. However, the memory of the destruction of the holy city and the oppression caused by their enemies have swept down all their delights and dried their tears.

"We hanged our harps upon the willows.....
They that carried us away captive.
Required of us a song saying,
Sing us one of the songs of Zion.
How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?"

This is perhaps the saddest part of the story. This is obviously very painful and heart breaking. There is a kind of irony running through like an undercurrent that their enemies tried to make fun of them by asking to sing one of the songs of Zion. But how could they sing the Lord's song in such a situation?

However, the Ode closes with a happy ending. They cry out to the Lord with repentance for their past misdeeds. They remember Jerusalem as their only joy and their only hope. They look upon their God Jehovah, their only God who is going to deliver them from such a situation and wipe away all their sorrows. The prophet Isaiah prophesied that the city of Babylon was doomed to be destroyed (Isaiah 13:1-11). Babylon was a land of idolatry and adultery and all kinds of immorality, pride and arrogance. That was the reason why God eventually destroyed Babylon, both the king and the city.

In the New Testament, Babylon has become an epithet and a "Symbol of Sin and Rebellion" (I Peter 5:13). The city of Babylon has been called, "The Mother of Harlot" (Rev 17:5), "The great prostitute who corrupted the earth with her sexual immorality" (Rev 19:2).

The whole world is like a Babylon which God never intended it to become. We are living now in a new Babylon today with the same pride and arrogance, hatred and enmity--- full of sins and diseases like Covid-19 and perhaps the worst is to come.

WHO WILL DELIVER US FROM SUCH A STATE?

It is very striking that Psalm 137 is itself has become a song now, one of the Lord's songs. Even hundreds and thousands of years after its composition, it has become now one of the Church's sweetest songs, as one of the Lord's best songs--- a song of victory, indeed.

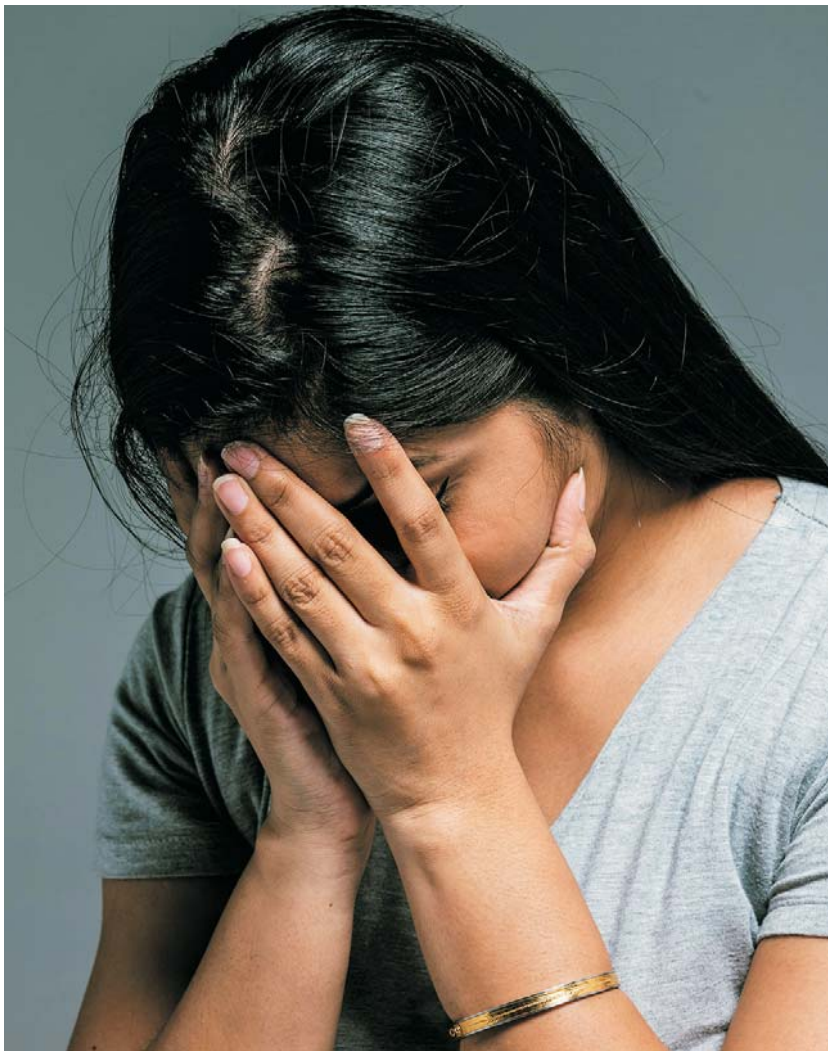
Let us look upon our Lord who only is our Deliverance, the only Savior and Hope, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen!

Designing Women

When I Think God Is Stretching Me.

By Liz Naidoo



There are moments in life when comfort gives way to discomfort, when clarity is replaced by questions, and when the familiar fades into the unknown. These are the moments I've come to recognize, not as punishment or abandonment from my Heavenly Daddy, but as sacred invitations. Invitations to grow, to trust, and to be stretched by the hand of God.

This past month of September has been so very full of activity and deadlines. Have you ever felt sorry for yourself and had your own "pity party." Well, I did. Not a meltdown, I am too strong minded in MY FAITH for that, but rather I had a good cry. I asked a lot of questions and I prayed too!

Did I get answers? Yes. I did. Isaiah 41:10, **"Do not fear, for I am with you…I will strengthen you and help you."**

Stretching rarely feels gentle. It often comes with pain, stress, and worry, it's a need to let go, but you cannot. But in the spiritual realm, stretching is not a tearing, but rather a tender tug from Heaven. It's God whispering, "There's more oil in you. Let Me draw it out."

I've felt this in this season, especially when my capacity was tested. But I gained a lesson when my patience was refined, and my faith deepened. The vision God gave me felt bigger than my resources. The calling felt heavier than my confidence, and when the assignment felt heavy, I knew that I had to light my path ahead with deep trust.

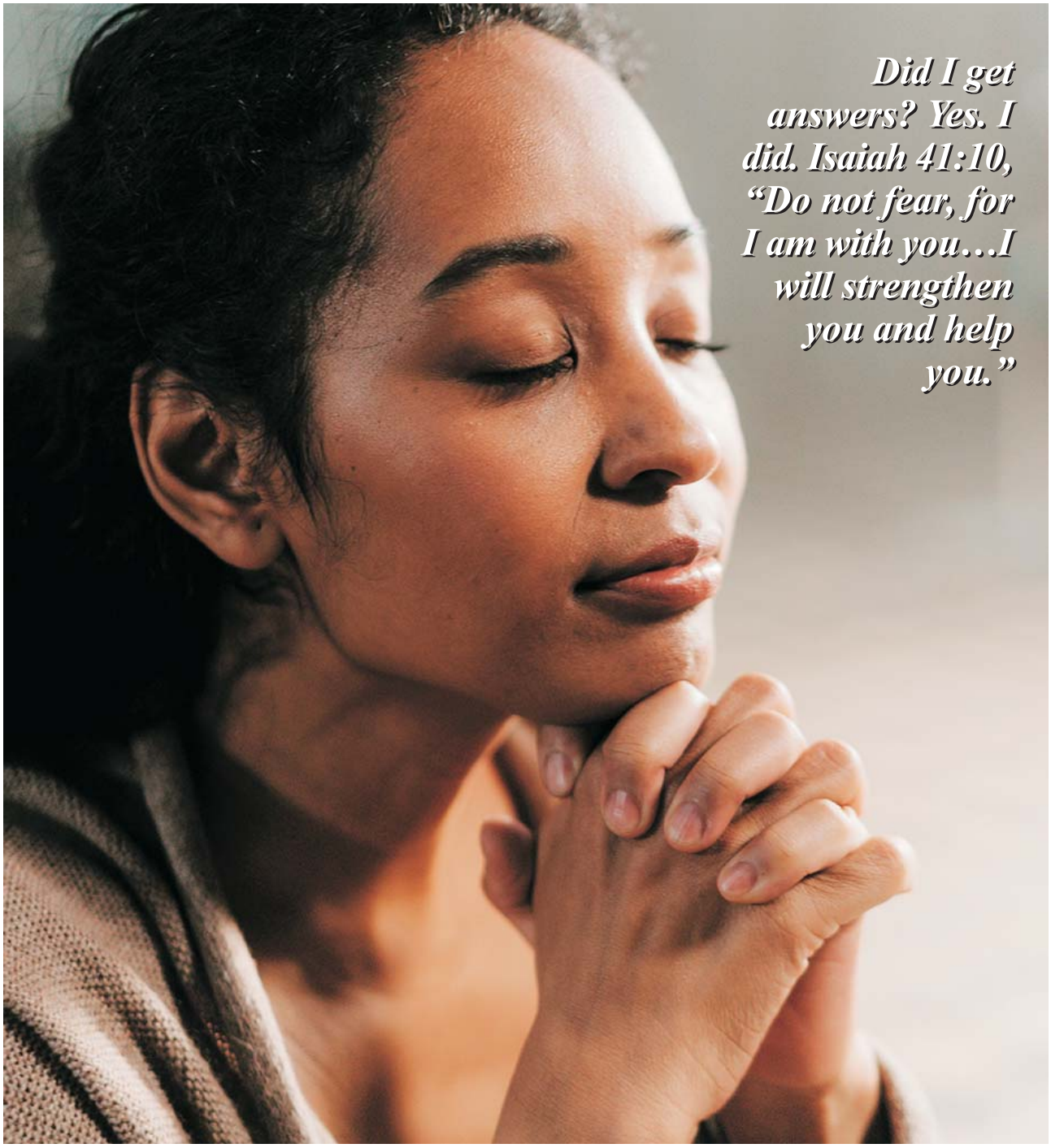
This took me back 10 years ago when I first launched Woman of Faith Magazine, and how very much I had to depend on ***His mercy.***

God doesn't stretch us to break us. He stretches us to mould and shape us. Like gold in the furnace, we are refined, never discarded. The heat reveals impurities, yes, but it also reveals strength.

In this season of stretching, I've discovered parts of myself I didn't know existed: resilience, creativity, compassion, and a deeper hunger for His presence.

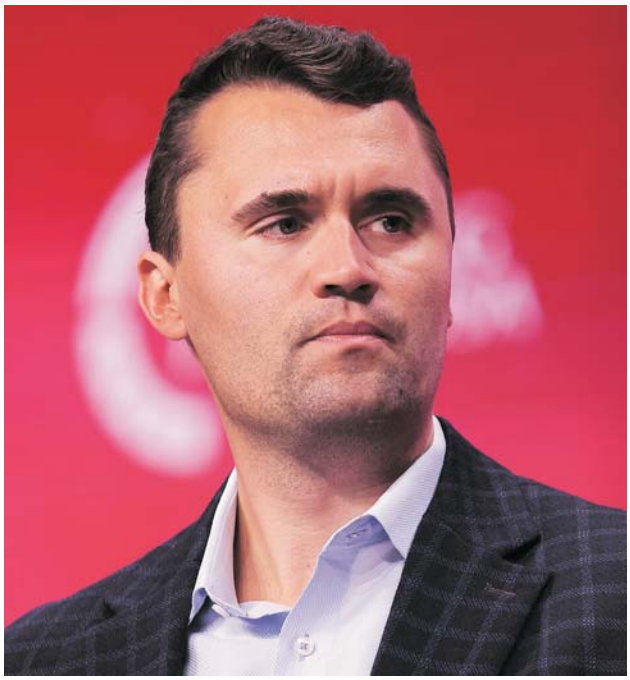
Sometimes the stretching was a delay, and that taught me patience. At others, it looked too tough for me to handle, but I persevered. But always, it's an opportunity to lean into our ***Father's mercy.***

In the stretching, I've found new depths of worship. I've found fresh oil for the journey. And I've found that God is not just interested in what I do, but in who I have become for His purpose and glory!



REDEEM THE TIME FOR THE DAYS ARE EVIL!

By Pastor Julie Ramiah



As the world attempts to come to terms with the tragic death of Charlie Kirk, may it be a reminder to us to redeem the time for evil is rampant.

Ephesians 5:15-17 (NLT) ***"So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. Don't act thoughtlessly but understand what the Lord wants you to do."***

Charlie Kirk fearlessly proclaiming Christ at a campus in US.

The senseless death of Charlie Kirk is no surprise to a believer. Psalm 37:12 states, "The wicked plot against the righteous and gnash their teeth at them" That's exactly how his assassin felt. What else can I say but what Scripture says: "Vengeance belongs to Me; I will repay,' says the Lord?"

Charlie was loved by millions. His death has not stopped his message of God's truth.

Charlie Kirk may not have been perfect, and no human being can claim to be. However, he fearlessly proclaimed Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. Assassinated at 31, in the prime of his life yet he lived his life purposefully and left a strong legacy of what he believed and lived.

Tomorrow is not guaranteed to anyone. As believers we should consider everyday as a gift from God and prioritize what truly matters. We must make our lives count.

May we live in a way that when our life on earth is over, it pleases God to say, "Well done my good and faithful servant..."

"In the end it's not the years in your life that counts, it's the life in your years" Abraham Lincoln.

Don't leave your loved ones with uncertainty and stress. Take control of your legacy with these 5 essential estate planning tips!

Step 1 Create a Will
Ensure your assets are distributed according to your wishes.

Step 2 Designate Beneficiaries
Update beneficiary designations for life insurance, retirement accounts, and most importantly your will!

Step 3 Consider a Trust
Protect assets, avoid estate administration, and reduce taxes.

Step 4 Review and Update
Regularly review and update your estate plan to reflect changes in your life.

Step 5 Organize Your Assets and Documents
Keep a centralised record of your assets and important documents for easy access.

TAKE THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS PEACE OF MIND AND CONTACT US FOR A CONSULTATION!

5 Tips for Estate Planning

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"He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy."

Proverbs 28:13(NKJV)

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